

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 8-11, and 14-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 24 are amended and claims 5 and 7 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter; (3) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and/or (4) place the application in better form for appeal, if necessary. Entry is thus requested.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 16, 19, and 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, for the reasons set forth below, claims 16, 19, and 23 have not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7-8, 10-11, 14-15, 17-18, 20-22, and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0122156 to Sawamura et al. (hereinafter "Sawamura"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 22 each have been amended to recite "a channel-changing prism configured to receive light irradiated from the illumination mixer and to provide a

predetermined distance between an axis of incidence light and an axis of light emitted by the channel-changing prism by rotating” and “a rotation device configured to rotate the channel-changing prism.” Sawamura fails to disclose or suggest such features, or the respective claimed combinations of independent claims 1 and 22.

More particularly, referring, for example, to Fig. 3 and paragraph [0041] of the present application, in certain embodiments of the invention the predetermined distance between the incidence light and the emission light is formed by rotation of the channel-changing prism 304 provided by a rotation device. In other words, the step difference between the incidence light and the emission light is controlled by the rotation of the channel-changing prism 304.

In contrast, referring to Figs. 1 and 3 of Sawamura, because the prism 9 is not rotatable, the whole constitution of the project would have to be modified to change the position of the prism 9 for controlling a step difference between the incidence light and the emission light. Accordingly, Sawamura fails to disclose or suggest the claimed channel-changing prism which provides a predetermined distance between incidence light and emission light by rotating or the claimed rotation device that rotates the channel-changing prism.

Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 22 are allowable over Sawamura. Dependent claims 3-4, 8, 10-11, 14-15, 17-18, 20-21, and 24-26, along with objected to claims 16, 19, and 23, are allowable over Sawamura at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claims 1 and 22, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

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Reply to Office Action of February 21, 2006

Docket No. **K-0609**

The Office Action rejected claims 2 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sawamura in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,375,330 to Mihalakis. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 2 and 9 are allowable over Sawamura at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features. Mihalakis fails to overcome the deficiencies of Sawamura, as it is merely cited as allegedly teaching use of a reflective mirror. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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